

TOWN OF NORWOOD
School Committee Meeting
James R. Savage Educational Center
Wednesday, March 14, 2018

A meeting of the Norwood School Committee was held on Wednesday, March 14, 2018. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Ms. Myev Bodenhofer, Chair, Mr. Patrick McDonough, Ms. Teresa Stewart and Ms. Maura Smith.

Committee Members Excused: Mrs. Michele Eysie Mullen

Administrators Present: Dr. Dave Thomson, Superintendent of Schools and Ms. Ann Marie Ellis, Director of Finance and Operations.

Minutes: Mr. McDonough made a motion to approve the public session minutes of February 28, 2018 as well as the February 28th Executive Session Minutes and March 8th Executive Session Minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Correspondence: Chairwoman Bodenhofer acknowledged receipt of the following correspondence:

- Invitation from MASC for a "Day on the Hill"; and
- A letter from James Anderer regarding Norwood Public School's Transportation Department.

Warrants: Chairwoman Bodenhofer informed that there were warrants to be signed. She then read the totals:

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|---|----------------|
| Payroll Warrants in the Amount of: | \$1,370,707.51 |
| | 86,241.72 |
| Accounts Payable Warrants in the amount of: | \$ 16,943.80 |
| | 23,001.85 |
| | 2,043.83 |
| | 476,372.81 |
| | 53,708.18 |
| | 11,284.86 |
| | 34,982.14 |
| For the Total Expenditure of: | \$2,075,286.70 |

Public Forum: Chairwoman Bodenhofer informed that this was the time in the meeting for members of the public to address the School Committee with items that they would like to see on a future agenda.

Kristen Sykes, of Norwood, was here this evening to speak as a teacher (Brockton Public Schools) and as a parent of children at the Callahan. She shared that she currently has a very large class and she explained some of the difficulties of having 27 or more students in one class, including safety issues. She strongly encourages the Committee to support adding another 3rd grade teacher at the Callahan for next year.

Mr. Alan Bishop, of Walpole, drives a van for the Transportation Department for the Norwood Public Schools. He informed that he spent many years flying jets and he said that driving a special education van is much harder. He also said that Norwood is lucky enough to have a great group of van drivers. He wanted the Committee to know that the pay in Norwood is not comparable to other van companies and it is the reason why it is hard to retain these great drivers.

Carol Fale and Kate Woods, both of Norwood, were here to speak on behalf of parents at the Callahan. They asked the School Committee to please consider adding a third first grade classroom next year. They both explained their reasons why this is important.

Announcements: None.

Appearances: Long Term Planning & Structural Deficit: Mr. Mazzucco was here this evening to talk about what a structural deficit is and shared that the Town of Norwood's ability to raise enough revenues each year to meet necessary expenses to maintain operations is not adequate. He added that this is not just a problem in Norwood, but it common in many towns. He also talked about revenues and expenses and major cost drivers.

Chairwoman Bodenhofer explained the process of putting a school budget together. She added that Town Meeting votes on the schools' bottom line number. She also said Norwood is unique in that we have a Town Wide Budget Balancing Committee that has representatives from the School Committee and the Town. She added that the long-term planning helps to lay the foundation for a possible Proposition 2 ½ Override (possibly in 2020).

Mr. Mazzucco explained that it is actually a good budget year as insurance rates did not increase.

The Committee Members had an opportunity for questions and comments.

At this point in the meeting, Chairwoman Bodenhofer shared the rules regarding Open Meeting Laws, including the fact that if the whole committee receives an e-mail from someone, and if they all respond, it is a violation of the Open Meeting Laws. She said that they are limited in what they can say in e-mails, texts, social media, etc. If more than two members get involved in a conversation, it is a violation.

Policy: Animal Policy (IMG), (IMGB): Mr. McDonough thanked the Committee Members for sending in their comments, saying that if there are no more additions or changes, they would send them off for legal review.

Ms. Stewart shared the minor changes and asked for feedback from the members.

The Members were in agreement that this wording now better covers both scenarios (if a student needs their therapy animal vs. an adjustment councilor having a therapy animal available a few hours a week).

Superintendent's Report and/or Late Agenda: Dr. Thomson said that Dr. Wyeth was not here this evening due to a family commitment. He then shared with the Committee that Dr. Wyeth will be attending a Literacy Seminar tomorrow held at Lesley College and he is also working on the Professional Development plans for next year. He added that a majority of next years' Professional Development will involve Social and Emotional Learning. Dr. Thomson added that Dr. Wyeth will be involved in putting together an SEL Task Force and there is a request for a School Committee Member to serve on this task force.

Dr. Thomson then commended our Model UN Students who attended the conference in New York this past weekend with 17 students.

Dr. Thomson then thanked our Buildings and Grounds staff for all the hard work they did over the last few days in cleaning up after the last two Nor'easters. He said we have had to use four snow days this year so far.

Dr. Thomson continued that tomorrow, Ms. Stewart and he would be attending a workshop hosted by MASC on the changing roles of School Resource Officers.

Budget: Transportation Report: Ms. Ellis read an excerpt of a law mandate regarding transportation for students that attend a private school under religious auspices.

She began by explaining that currently our regular transpiration contract is with Michael J. Conley Transportation, which expires July 1, 2019. (We are in the 2nd year of a 3-year contract).

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|--------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|
| Annual cost: | | | |
| Year 1 of contract | \$816,660 | per year or | \$345 per day |
| Year 2 of contract | \$840,060 | per year or | \$359 per day |
| Year 3 of contract | \$863,460 | per year or | \$369 per day |

Ms. Ellis explained that the buses are used on a 3-tier schedule. She reviewed the tiers.

This year we have sold 1,421 bus passes. (Ms. Ellis broke the bus sales down by schools).

Ms. Ellis explained that, although buses may not be full, 13 buses are still needed to get the students from all over town to the schools at different times through traffic.

With regard to Special Education drivers, Ms. Ellis said that the wage scale is prohibiting us from hiring and keeping the amount of qualified drivers that are needed.

Ms. Ellis gave the Members a hand-out she received from the Director of Transportation earlier today regarding what other towns are paying their drivers and monitors.

Ms. Smith read part of a letter that Committee Members received tonight from Mr. Anderer.

Budget Sub-Committee Update: Chair Bodenhofer and Ms. Smith updated the Committee that we have a \$1.3 million budget deficit. She explained that we could reduce the deficit by \$303,000 by postponing the POS – Cafeteria and the 1:1 Initiative at the Coakley Middle School (but still keeping the 1:1 initiative at the High School).

She also recommended raising Circuit Breaker estimates from \$1.7 million to \$1.8 million.

Ms. Smith then shared that Ms. Ellis was able to review everything and find a way to reduce another \$298,109.00 and pay for utilities out of a school food service revolver for another \$15,000 reduction. (For a total in reductions of \$313,109.00).

Finally, Ms. Smith informed that if the proposed new hires are eliminated, another \$196,521 can be reduced for a new deficit total of \$390,370.

The good news from the last Town Wide Budget Sub Committee Meeting was that there was a recommendation that the Schools receive over \$680,000 in prepaids for special education. (\$300,000 from free cash and \$380,000 from savings in healthcare and Medicare). She said that those transactions would have to be approved by Town Meeting.

The next Budget Sub Committee Meeting is scheduled for next Monday morning at 9:00 a.m. The next regular School Committee Meeting is next Wednesday night.

Circuit Breaker is currently \$1.7 million and if we increase it to \$1.8 it will reduce our deficit.

FY19 Budget Updates: Chair Bodenhofer and Dr. Thomson

Ms. Smith made a motion to increase the Circuit Breaker estimates from \$1.7 million to \$1.8 million, which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Ms. Smith made a motion to cut capital requests by \$303,000 (POS Balch Cafeteria and 1:1 Initiative at the CMS). (The grant Mr. Kidd was able to secure will be for the 1:1 Initiative at the HS), which was seconded by Mr. McDonough. The Committee voted in favor 3-0-1 (Mr. McDonough abstained).

Chair Bodenhofer said we need to have a plan by the end of the month, but added that we can still shift things around as needed.

Ms. Smith made a motion to approve the reductions Ms. Ellis reviewed in the amount of \$298,109.00 and to pay some of the utilities out of the Food Service Revolver Fund in the amount of \$15,000 (for a total of \$313,109.00), which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Ms. Smith updated that the remaining deficit is \$586,891.

Ms. Smith made a motion for a 5-minute recess, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Old Business: Long Term Agenda: Chairwoman Bodenhofer asked if anyone had anything to add. She reminded that we added the meeting of March 21st for budget discussion. The Recreation Department, School/Grade redistricting and MSBA updates were all discussed as future agenda items.

Dr. Thomson said the statement of interest for the Coakley Middle School project is complete and has been submitted to MSBA. He added that there are just a couple of signatures left to get for the packet. He added that we should hear something around December of next year.

Mr. McDonough said he would like to explore the possibility of looking into building a new middle school on our own without MSBA as an option. The Chair said this could be added to an agenda after the budget process is finished, maybe in June.

New Business: SEL Task Force – Selection of School Committee Member Liaison: Dr. Thomson said he is looking for a School Committee Member to serve on the Social-Emotional Task Force.

Ms. Stewart volunteered to serve on this task force.

Out of State Field Trip – Nashville, TN, April 13-17, 2019: The Fine Arts Department is looking to have a contingent go to the Education Performance and Music Tour in Nashville, TN next year. (April 13-17, 2019).

Mr. McDonough made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart.

Mr. McDonough asked if there is a scholarship for students who may want to go that may not be able to afford to go.

Dr. Thomson said he will look into it.

With regard to the vote on the table, the Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Consent Agenda:

Acceptance of One Donation: Dr. Thomson recommended accepting the following donations:

- Women’s Community Committee - \$400.00 Gift Card – CMS;
- Women’s Community Committee - \$500.00 Gift Care – LEAD Program;
- Women’s Community Committee - \$2,000.00 – HS – Model UN Club;
- Norfolk District Attorney’s Office – Narcan – 18 Doses – Two per building;
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Mini-Grants - \$1,000.00 – Balch School; and
- Balch School PTO - \$1,790.00 – After School Enrichment – Balch School.

Mr. McDonough made a motion to accept these donations, which was seconded by Ms. Stewart. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Personnel: Dr. Thomson said he has received a letter of resignation from H. S. Principal Jonathon Bourn, effective June 30th. He thanked Mr. Bourn for his service to the High School and he wished him well.

School Committee Addenda: Ms. Smith congratulated the students who participated in the High School Foreign Language night. She also sent her congratulations to the Norwood Students who competed in the recent High School Drama Festival and won in the preliminary rounds. Ms. Smith then reviewed many of the positions and programs that have been eliminated over the past few years. She said we have to make a decision. She asked if we want to keep subtracting and subtracting in the Norwood Schools? She said lets stop subtracting and figure out a way to start adding.

Ms. Stewart said that the registration for the extended day program has begun. For the parents who were not able to secure a spot for their child, she

recommended putting your child's name on the wait list so the Committee will be able to see what the needs are.

Mr. McDonough said he is looking forward to the League of Women Voters debate that is coming up. He also shared his new campaign email address:

Electpatrickmcdonough@gmail.com

Chairwoman Bodenhofer informed that the MICCA Preview Concert that was scheduled for tonight has been rescheduled until next Wednesday night and there will be a \$5.00 charge. The MICCA Festival will be March 23rd, 24th and 25th and Norwood High School will be hosting the Choral portion of the MICCA Competition.

Executive Session: None.

Adjournment: Mr. McDonough made a motion for adjournment at 10:15 p.m., which was seconded by Ms. Smith. The Committee voted in favor 4-0.

Respectfully Submitted:

Donna G. Doliner, Clerk
Norwood School Committee